

**6110.1200 NAVIGATION OF WATERCRAFT ON THE WATERS OF THE STATE;
SAFETY EQUIPMENT.**

Subpart 1. **Rules of the road.** Rules of the road:

A. When watercraft are running in the same direction, the watercraft being overtaken has right-of-way and must hold course and speed. The watercraft which is astern shall pass only when there is sufficient distance so the maneuver can be done safely and only at such speed that its wash or wake will not endanger the watercraft being passed or its occupants. No person operating a watercraft shall abruptly change its course without first determining that it can be safely done without risk of collision.

B. When watercraft are approaching each other head on, or nearly so, each shall turn to the right a sufficient distance so that they will safely pass. When the course of an approaching craft is so far to the right as not to be considered as meeting head on, each shall maintain its course and pass clear.

C. When watercraft are crossing courses, or approaching each other obliquely or at right angles, so as to involve risk of collision, the craft which has the other on its own right shall yield right-of-way.

D. A nonmotorized watercraft has right-of-way over a motor-powered watercraft except when it is the overtaking watercraft. Motor-powered watercraft should always keep clear and pass astern of nonmotorized watercraft.

E. Small watercraft shall not insist on the right-of-way, nor unnecessarily impede the passage of large commercial vessels, which are restricted in their ability to maneuver by size, draft, or speed.

F. When watercraft are in a narrow channel, each shall keep as far to the right as may be safe or practical.

G. All watercraft shall yield the right-of-way to enforcement or other authorized emergency watercraft displaying a red or blue flashing light.

Subp. 2. **Mode of operation of watercraft.** Mode of operation:

A. No person shall operate a watercraft in such a manner that its wash or wake will endanger, harass, or unnecessarily interfere with any other person or property.

B. No person shall operate a watercraft in any manner as to intentionally obstruct or interfere with the takeoff, landing, or taxiing of any aircraft.

C. No person shall operate a watercraft within 150 feet of a diver's warning flag (described in Minnesota Statutes, section 86B.601).

D. No person shall operate a watercraft in the vicinity of a lock and dam on the Mississippi River from Upper St. Anthony Falls through Lock and Dam Number Eight in violation of the following:

(1) In the marked restricted area 600 feet upstream or 150 feet downstream of the dam, including auxiliary locks not in service.

(2) At greater than a slow-no wake speed in the lock or lock approach area. "Slow-no wake," means the operation of a watercraft at the slowest possible speed necessary to maintain steerage, and in no case greater than five miles per hour.

(3) Enforcement, emergency, resource management, and other government personnel or contractors are exempt from this part when performing official duties or authorized work.

E. The operator of any watercraft, when signaled to do so by a conservation officer, sheriff, or sheriff's deputy shall bring the watercraft to a stop or maneuver it in a manner which will allow the officer to come alongside.

Subp. 3. **Personal flotation (lifesaving) devices.** Flotation devices:

A. Every person on board a watercraft or waterfowl boat shall wear or have readily accessible a U.S. Coast Guard-approved wearable personal flotation device. In addition to these devices, watercraft and waterfowl boats 16 feet or more in length, except canoes and kayaks, must also carry at least one U.S. Coast Guard-approved throwable personal flotation device. A U.S. Coast Guard-approved throwable personal flotation device may be carried in lieu of any personal flotation device required by this part, on nonmotorized watercraft operated by lifeguards within a marked swimming area, as defined in part 6110.1600.

B. Persons being towed by a watercraft on water skis or other devices shall be considered to be on board the towing watercraft for the purpose of personal flotation device requirements. A U.S. Coast Guard-approved wearable personal flotation device must be either carried in the towing watercraft or worn by the person being towed.

C. All personal flotation devices required by this subpart must be:

(1) approved by the U.S. Coast Guard;

(2) legibly marked with any requirements and the approval number issued by the U.S. Coast Guard;

(3) in serviceable condition free of tears, rot, punctures, or waterlogging, and with all straps and fasteners present and in good condition;

(4) of the appropriate size for the intended wearer, if the device is designed to be worn, and in compliance with any requirements listed on the U.S. Coast Guard approval label;

(5) for wearable devices, either readily accessible or worn, except when:

(a) devices are required to be worn to be accepted as U.S. Coast Guard-approved; or

(b) wearing a U.S. Coast Guard-approved wearable personal flotation device is mandatory; and

(6) for throwable devices, immediately available.

"Readily accessible" means easily retrievable within a reasonable amount of time in an emergency. "Immediately available" means easily reached in time of emergency. Personal flotation devices located in locked containers, under heavy objects, or left in shipping bags are not considered readily accessible or immediately available.

Subp. 4. Sound producing devices. Sound producing devices:

A. All motorboats 16 feet or more in overall length shall carry a power-, hand-, or mouth-operated horn, or whistle capable of producing a sound for at least two seconds which is audible for at least one-half mile.

B. All motorboats 26 feet but less than 40 feet in overall length shall be equipped with a hand- or power-operated horn or whistle capable of producing a sound for at least two seconds which is audible for at least one mile.

C. All motorboats 40 feet or more in length shall be equipped with a power-operated horn or whistle capable of producing a sound for at least two seconds which is audible for at least one mile.

Subp. 5. Fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers:

A. All motorboats less than 26 feet in length with construction permitting the entrapment of explosive or flammable gases or vapors must have at least one B-I type hand portable U.S. Coast Guard-approved fire extinguisher fully charged and in serviceable condition on board and readily accessible.

B. All motorboats 26 feet to less than 40 feet in length must have at least two B-I U.S. Coast Guard-approved hand portable fire extinguishers, or at least one B-II type U.S. Coast Guard-approved hand portable fire extinguisher on board in serviceable condition, fully charged, and readily accessible.

C. All motorboats 40 feet to not more than 65 feet in length must have at least three B-I type U.S. Coast Guard-approved fire extinguishers; or at least one B-I type plus

one B-II type approved hand portable fire extinguisher on board. These fire extinguishers must be fully charged, in serviceable condition and readily accessible.

D. All motorboats over 65 feet in length must have at least three B-II type U.S. Coast Guard-approved fire extinguishers on board. These fire extinguishers must be fully charged, in serviceable condition, and readily accessible.

E. When a motorboat is equipped with a U.S. Coast Guard-approved fixed fire extinguishing system installed in the engine compartment, one less B-I extinguisher is required. The fixed system must be in serviceable condition and fully charged.

Subp. 6. **Ventilation equipment.** Ventilation equipment:

A. All motor-powered watercraft, except open watercraft, on which construction or decking-over is commenced after January 1, 1972, and which use fuel having a flash point of 110 degrees Fahrenheit or less, shall have at least two ventilator ducts, filled with cowls or their equivalent, for the efficient removal of explosive or flammable gases from the bilges of every engine and fuel tank compartment. There shall be at least one exhaust duct installed so as to extend from the open atmosphere to the lower portion of the bilge and at least one intake duct installed so as to extend to a point at least midway to the bilge or at least below the level of the carburetor air intake. The cowls shall be located and trimmed for maximum effectiveness so as to prevent displaced fumes from being recirculated.

B. As used in this section, the term "open watercraft" means those motor-powered watercraft with all engine and fuel tank compartments, and other spaces to which explosive or flammable gases and vapors from these compartments may flow, open to the atmosphere and so arranged as to prevent the entrapment of such gases and vapors within the watercraft.

C. Alterations necessary to make existing motor-powered watercraft comply with these requirements shall be accomplished as soon as practicable but in any case shall be completed by July 1, 1972.

Subp. 7. **Lighting equipment.** Lighting equipment:

A. All motorized watercraft must display the correct lights for their class from sunset to sunrise when underway or at anchor.

Red and green lights must be visible at a distance of one mile and white lights at a distance of two miles.

B. The following terms are defined for the purpose of these rules:

(1) "Aft" means to the rear of the midlength measured from end to end of the hull over the deck excluding sheer.

(2) "All-round light" means a white light visible in an unbroken horizontal arc of 360 degrees.

(3) "Combination light" means a single fixture showing green to starboard and red to port, visible in an unbroken horizontal arc from dead ahead to 22.5 degrees abaft the beam on its respective side.

(4) "Forward" means forward of the midlength measured from end to end of the hull over the deck excluding sheer.

(5) "Masthead light" means a white light visible in an unbroken horizontal arc of 225 degrees, placed at or near the centerline of the watercraft. The light must be visible from dead ahead to 22.5 degrees abaft the beam on both sides of the watercraft. On motorboats less than 40 feet in length, this light must be at least three feet higher than the red and green lights. On motorboats 40 feet or more in length, this light must be at least nine feet above the gunwale.

(6) "Side lights" means separate fixtures, the one on the starboard side showing green and the one on the port side showing red, visible in an unbroken horizontal arc from dead ahead to 22.5 degrees abaft the beam on its respective side.

(7) "At the stem and at the stern" means as nearly as practicable at the stem and at the stern, respectively.

(8) "Stern light" means a white light placed at the stern, visible in an unbroken horizontal arc of 135 degrees. The light must be visible from dead astern to 22.5 degrees abaft the beam on both sides of the watercraft.

(9) "Visible," when applied to lights, means visible on a dark night with clear atmosphere. The prescribed visibility means minimum visibility, and does not restrict greater distance of visibility, provided that the navigation lights are primarily intended for navigation purposes and will not be confused with other lights.

C. The lighting system on each watercraft must be chosen from either subitem (1) or (2):

(1) Motorboats less than 40 feet in length must display the following:

(a) a combination light or separate sidelights and an all-round light at the stern when underway and not anchored; and

(b) an all-round light when anchored.

(2) Motorboats of any length must display the following:

(a) a combination light or separate sidelights, a masthead light, and a stern light when underway and not anchored; and

(b) an all-round light when anchored.

D. All nonmotorized watercraft when under way or anchored, between sunset and sunrise, shall carry aboard but not necessarily fixed to any part of the watercraft a minimum

of one lantern or flashlight capable of showing a white light visible all around the horizon at a distance of two miles or more. The light or lantern shall be displayed in sufficient time to avoid collision with another watercraft.

E. When a watercraft is moored to a buoy authorized by a permit issued under part 6110.1800 it shall not be required to display the anchor light required in items C and D.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 14.388; 86B.211; 86B.501; 361.25*

History: *10 SR 2346; 15 SR 2430; 20 SR 759; 27 SR 1537; L 2013 c 121 s 58; 40 SR 1619*

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